

# Sport & Physical Activity Strategy

2026-2031



SOUTH  
KESTEVEN  
DISTRICT  
COUNCIL



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# Our vision for South Kesteven

## **Vision:**

**Inspiring everyone to live a more active life**

## **Mission:**

**Providing opportunities for people to be more active, more often**



Our Corporate Plan clearly sets out South Kesteven District Council's ambition to be a 'thriving district to live in, work, and visit'.

Central to this is our responsibility to enhance the strength, wellbeing, security and capacity of our communities for a thriving and cohesive society that all our residents are proud to belong to.

We want to tackle the inequalities in participation in sport and physical activity, remove barriers and create inclusive opportunities for all. We want sport and physical activity to be integrated into our lifestyles and to ensure opportunities are available for all ages and abilities. By tackling the inequalities and removing barriers seen in sport and physical activity and health, this will allow the residents of South Kesteven to 'be more active, more often'.

As a council, we have demonstrated our commitment to ensuring there are opportunities for people to be active in South Kesteven and we will continue to work with other partners and stakeholders at a district, county and national level to reduce inactivity.

We have also shown our commitment to ensuring there are opportunities for people to be active in South Kesteven, including the establishment of LeisureSK Ltd who took over the management of the council's leisure centres in January 2021. We will work together to provide high quality facilities, that are customer focused and meet the needs of residents in South Kesteven. We also have a shared ambition to provide outreach activities in our communities, providing opportunities for all to be active across the whole district.

This strategy is a vision for the next five years and sets out the mission to provide opportunities that our residents need now and, in the future, to support healthy lifestyles and reduce health inequalities.



**Cllr Ashley Baxter**

Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Finance and Economic Development  
South Kesteven District Council



**Cllr Paul Stokes**

Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Culture and Leisure



# The Benefits of Sport and Physical Activity


There is a need for physical activity, sport and wellbeing opportunities which play a major role in shaping the health of the nation. Being active means different things to different people and it's about finding what works for the individual.

Active people live healthier, longer and happier lives, with physical activity reducing the risk of diseases,

helping to support individuals to maintain a healthier weight. Active lifestyles prevent 900,000 cases of diabetes, 93,000 cases of dementia delivering a combined saving of £7.1 billion to the UK economy.


There is strong evidence recognising the extensive health benefits for people of all ages, including:

Children	Adults	Older Adults
Bone health Cognitive function Cardiovascular fitness Muscle fitness Weight status Depression 	All-cause mortality Stroke and heart disease Hypertension Type 2 diabetes 8 cancers Depression Cognitive function Dementia Quality of life Sleep Anxiety/depression Weight status	Falls Frailty Physical Function 



Dementia  
by up to  
**30%**

Cardiovascular  
Disease by up to  
**35%**






Colon  
Cancer by  
**30%**



Depression  
by up to  
**30%**


Regular  
physical  
activity  
reduces  
your  
risk of:

Hip  
fractures  
by up to  
**68%**



Breast Cancer by **20%**



Type 2 diabetes by up to  
**40%**

All-cause mortality by **30%**

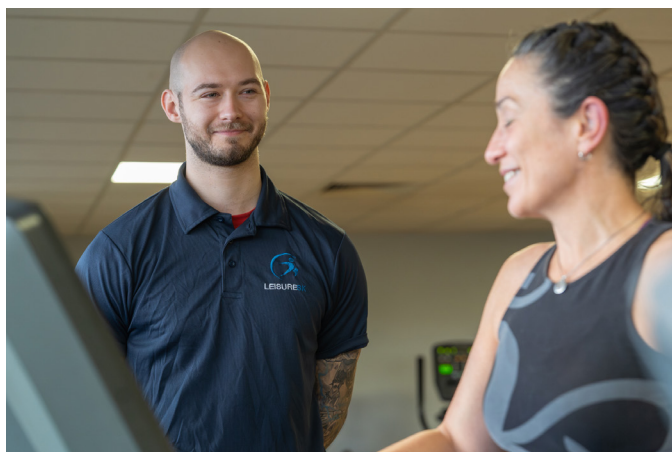




Further benefits include improved sleep, helping to manage a healthy weight, building muscle strength and improving overall cardiovascular health.

Sport and Physical Activity also deliver a further two direct benefits through social value. The primary value is the direct benefit and value to individuals with improved wellbeing, measured at £96.7 billion.

The secondary value is the wider value to society, including the state and is measured at £10.5 billion – Sport England.



**“Every £1 spent on Sport and Physical Activity generates almost £4 in return across health and wellbeing, strengthening communities and the national economy”**

*SPORT ENGLAND*



# Guidance, Evidence and Partnership Working

The South Kesteven Sport and Physical Activity Strategy considers guidance from a wide range of strategies, both locally and nationally, as well as the World Health Organization's guidelines.

The Council alone cannot achieve its corporate ambition of **Connecting Communities**, so therefore we recognise that a 'Whole System Change' approach is required.

A wide collaboration with several partners from Active Lincolnshire, LeisureSK Ltd, Health and Social Care, the Voluntary Sector, Lincolnshire County Council and many more, allows us to co-create and deliver initiatives that support the outcomes of this strategy.

## UK Chief Medical Officers' Physical Activity Guidelines

Below you can find the recommended guidelines for four age groups based on the UK Chief Medical Officer's Guidelines. More information can be found at [www.nhs.uk/live-well/exercise/exercise-health-benefits](https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/exercise/exercise-health-benefits)

### Adults (19 TO 64 YEARS)

- Do strengthening activities that work all the major muscle groups (legs, hips, back, abdomen, chest, shoulders and arms) on at least 2 days a week
- Do at least 150 minutes of moderate intensity activity a week or 75 minutes of vigorous intensity activity a week

### Older Adults (65+ YEARS)

- Be physically active every day, even if it's just light activity
- Do activities that improve strength, balance and flexibility on at least 2 days per week
- Do at least 150 minutes of moderate intensity activity a week or 75 minutes of vigorous intensity activity if you are already active, or a combination of both

### Children and young people (5 TO 18 YEARS)

- Aim for an average of at least 60 minutes of moderate or vigorous intensity physical activity a day across the week
- Take part in a variety of types and intensities of physical activity across the week to develop movement skills, muscles and bones

### Disabled adults

- Aim for at least 150 minutes each week of moderate intensity activity
- Do strength and balance activities on at least two days per week

# District Health Profile and Physical Activity Levels

This section provides an overview of population health profiles and physical activity (PA) levels to inform strategic priorities and targeted interventions within the Sport and Physical Activity Strategy. Understanding who is least active, the health conditions which are most prevalent, and the barriers faced, enables a place-based, preventative, and inclusive approach.

South Kesteven covers a vast area of 365sq miles and is made up of four market towns and many rural areas. The district has a wealth of community assets, leisure facilities, parks and open spaces that provide opportunities to be active in our communities. We appreciate that not everyone will be able to travel to their local leisure facility which therefore requires more opportunities, in more areas.

With a current population of 147,074 and a forecast to grow to 159,795 within twenty years, it is essential that there are spaces and places to be active within our communities. South Kesteven is an ageing district and projects that by 2046, 30% of the district will be aged 65 or over.

■ Life expectancy for both men and women: 79.94 – males, 83.71 - females

■ Percentage of adults who are physically active: 22.2%

■ Percentage of children who are physically active: 50.5% (2022/2023 data)

■ Percentage of adults who are considered overweight or obese: 59.63% (2022/2023 data)

■ Percentage of children who are considered overweight or obese:

- Reception – 20.62% 2022/2023
- Year 6 - 35.92% 2022/2023

■ Percentage of diabetes prevalence (17 years+):

- 7.40% (Stamford)
- 10.11% (Bourne/Deepings).
- 8.20% (Grantham)
- 7.89% (UK average)

■ Percentage of population that is made up of older adults (65+): 23.82%

■ Percentage of adults who have reported a limited long term illness or disability: 17.87% (Census 2021)

■ People who suffer with mental health issues in any given year: 1 in 4 people

In the UK:

■ Physical inactivity is estimated to contribute to almost 1 in 10 premature deaths from coronary heart disease (CHD) and 1 in 6 deaths in the UK from any cause.

■ Physical inactivity is increasingly recognised as a global health priority that should be the concern of all healthcare systems (WHO, 2024) people with a long-term health condition or disability are twice as likely to be inactive as those without.

■ Physical activity is essential for people to live better with long-term conditions.

■ The greatest health and economic gains can be made by supporting those who are physically inactive to participate in some physical activity. physical activity helps to delay the onset and progression of diseases for as long as possible, it also helps people to recover from surgery more quickly and it is beneficial for mental health.

These health challenges place increasing demand on healthcare services and highlight the need for preventative, physical activity led solutions.

# Physical Activity Levels

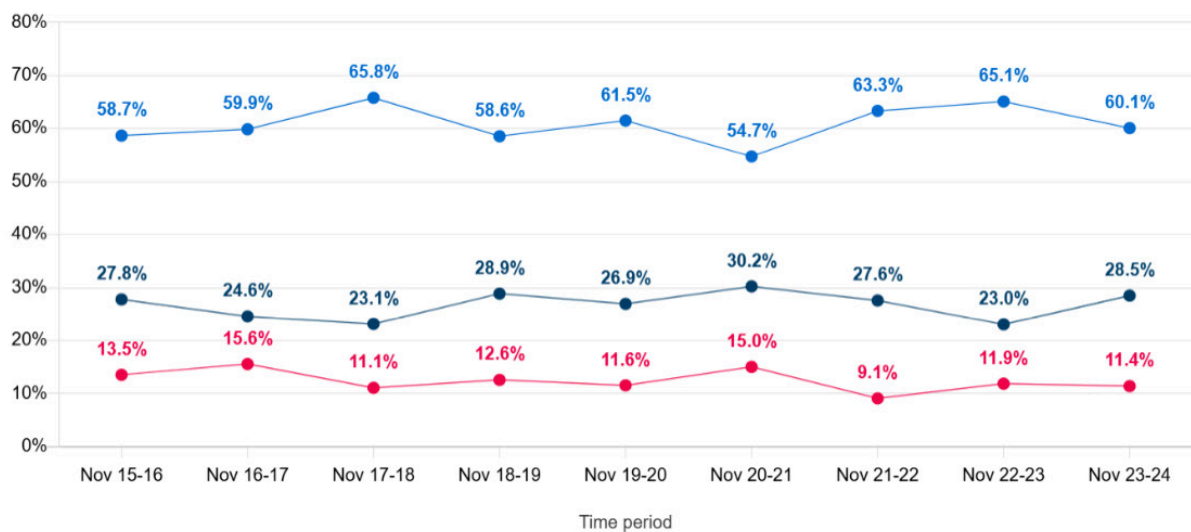
The below data set is sourced from The Office for Health Improvement and Disparities, and includes gardening activity, in accordance with CMO recommendations. This data is based on those aged 19 and over.

- Percentage of physically active children and young people – 50.5% in 2022/2023
- Percentage of physically active adults – 68.2%
- Percentage of physically inactive adults – 22.2%

Sport England publishes a similar Physical Activity indicator using Active Lives Adult Survey data, however, excludes gardening activity. This data classifies adults as 16 and over. This data can be found in the graphs below.

To support local monitoring of performance against the CMO guidance for the appropriate ages, it is necessary to provide estimates with a different definition to those figures produced by Sport England.

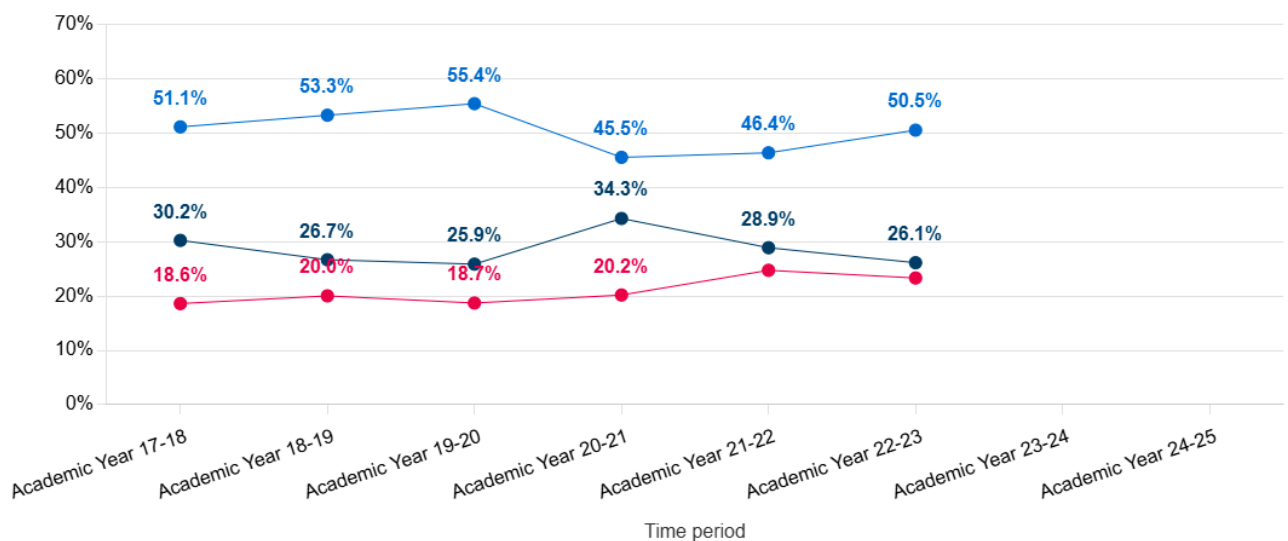
## Adult data



% Levels of activity (Main - 3 categories):

- Inactive: less than 30 minutes a week
- Fairly active: 30-149 minutes a week
- Active: at least 150 minutes a week

## Children and Young People (CPY) data



% Levels of activity:

- Less active: less than an average of 30 minutes a day
- Fairly active: an average of 30-59 minutes a day
- Active: an average of 60+ minutes a day

Please note, some data is unavailable for children and young people due to a small sample size.



# Delivering a Healthier South Kesteven: Action Plan

South Kesteven's ambition is to deliver a Sport and Physical Activity Strategy that brings partners together with shared objectives, to grow and promote opportunities for sport and physical activity, helping to build a healthier district.

The four pillars, priority outcomes and actions can be found below to underpin the initiatives that we aspire to deliver, that support the outcomes of this strategy.

Pillar	Priority outcomes	Action	Why is this important
<b>Active Society</b>  Creating a social movement to reduce inactivity, drive participation and understand the benefits of physical activity for all ages and abilities	Improve the health of residents and visitors by encouraging and providing opportunities to be active following the UK Chief Medical Officer's physical activity guidelines, as found in section 3  Improve the understanding of the benefits of physical activity and deliver a positive customer experience for everyone who uses the Council's leisure facilities and services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Ensure participation is affordable and accessible to the whole community</li> <li>■ Encourage physical activity as a holistic approach to wellbeing, including a focus on mental health</li> <li>■ Provide enhanced information around physical activity, diet and lifestyle as part of our core services using communications and social media channels</li> <li>■ Showcase ways of integrating physical activity and movement into the lifestyles of residents and part of everyday life</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Obesity and illnesses such as diabetes and cardiovascular disease are prevalent in our society but often preventable which incurs a significant cost to the NHS</li> <li>■ Regular exercise as part of a healthy lifestyle is proven to reduce the risk of certain illnesses</li> <li>■ Educating people on the benefits of physical activity is more likely to result in behaviour change</li> <li>■ Delivering a positive customer experience will result in repeat visits and increased participation</li> </ul>

<p><b>Active Place</b></p> <p>Creating safe, accessible environments for people, of all ages, to take part in regular physical activity</p>	<p>Deliver and facilitate high quality leisure facilities and community spaces to deliver positive and affordable opportunities for people to improve their health</p> <p>Recognise that our leisure services serve as a community health hub and are a core part of Neighbourhood Health</p> <p>Physical activity refers to all movement including during leisure time, for transport to get to and from places, or as part of a person's work or domestic activities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Invest in the Council's leisure facilities to ensure that they are high quality and meet the needs of customers</li> <li>■ Use local leisure in a holistic and innovative manner</li> <li>■ Lead with a place-based approach using local data</li> <li>■ Continue to invest in the Council's leisure facilities to contribute towards the Council's carbon reduction goals</li> <li>■ Explore opportunities to use parks and open spaces within the district to encourage the use for physical activity, informal play and structured sport</li> <li>■ Support the active travel agenda working with partners to encourage walking, wheeling or cycling</li> <li>■ Invest in the Council's play areas, parks and open spaces to provide high quality facilities meeting the needs of our residents</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Providing safe places for people to be active encourages participation</li> <li>■ Positive and affordable opportunities ensure our services are available to all and encourage return</li> <li>■ Active travel offers extensive personal, environmental, community and economic benefits to the district</li> <li>■ Green spaces provide opportunities to exercise and spending time in nature can improve our quality of life mentally, physically and socially</li> </ul>
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## Active People

Creating opportunities across all settings to help all people and communities to take part in regular physical activity

Tackle inactivity in priority groups and areas whilst increasing the numbers of people taking part in physical activity across the district, including:

- Rural and deprived areas
- Young people
- Older adults
- Women and girls
- Men's health
- People with disabilities and/or long-term health conditions

Understand the types of activities that residents would like to see more of in their communities

■ Support and offer a broad range of sport and physical activity opportunities that reflect the interests and needs of the community and visitors to the district

■ Work with the Council's leisure provider and partners to run health intervention programmes that result in improving health and wellbeing residents

■ Deliver outreach activities in communities for those in rural areas, with disabilities and/or living with long term health conditions

■ Consult with residents about the types of activities they would like to see in their communities for all ages, abilities and families

■ Work with partners to develop maps that can be used to promote and enable physical activity

■ Focus on positive experiences as the foundations for a long and healthy life

■ South Kesteven has many rural communities that may not have access to traditional leisure facilities

■ South Kesteven is an ageing population and physical activity is increasingly recognised as a cost-effective preventative approach to reducing chronic conditions

■ The rate of obesity and diabetes is increasing in young people.

■ Physical activity has a major role to play in the prevention, management, treatment and rehabilitation of many long-term conditions.

■ Participation in physical activity is lower for people with a disability and/or a long-term health condition

■ The Council needs to understand the needs and demands of residents and users of leisure facilities



<p><b>Active System</b></p> <p>Coordinated leadership, partnerships and workforce capability to reduce sedentary behaviour</p>	<p>Foster strong, meaningful cross-sector partnerships to expand activity opportunities, strengthen collaborative working, and enhance community cohesion</p> <p>Embed movement into healthcare and signpost to available NHS and partner tools</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Recognise that physical activity is much more than participation in sport and includes activities such as walking, gardening and dancing</li> <li>■ Facilitate partnerships and collaboration between authorities, organisations, communities and groups to empower those who can make change</li> <li>■ Work with partners from all sectors to tackle health and other inequalities in areas of highest need</li> <li>■ Ensure opportunities attract funding and collaboration on innovative projects</li> <li>■ Work with businesses and organisations to ensure workplace wellbeing initiatives, including physical activity, are considered</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Working in collaboration with other partners, we can pool our resources, utilise our communication channels and achieve so much more</li> <li>■ Sport and physical activity provide opportunities for socialising and brings communities together</li> <li>■ Community cohesion and anti-social behaviour can be reduced by providing opportunities to be active, particularly for young people</li> <li>■ 72% of people say the NHS is the most trusted source of advice on physical activity</li> </ul>
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# Key Performance Indicators

Key Performance Indicators (KPI's) are included within the Sport and Physical Activity Strategy to provide a clear framework for measuring progress, impact and success. They enable the Council and partners to assess whether interventions are achieving the intended outcomes and will identify areas for improvement.

Pillar	KPI number and description
<b>Active Society</b>  Creating a social movement to reduce inactivity and enhance understanding and value the benefits of physical activity for all ages and abilities.	<b>1.1</b> Percentage of Inactive Adults and Children in South Kesteven.
	<b>1.2</b> Total number of members visiting each South Kesteven owned leisure facility increasing 2% YoY
	<b>1.3</b> Participation levels in healthy weight programmes
	<b>1.4</b> Number of individuals undertaking apprenticeships in Sport and Physical Activity
<b>Active Place</b>  Creating safe, accessible environments for people, of all ages, to take part in regular physical activity	<b>2.1</b> Annual Sport and Physical Activity events such as Health & Wellness Days, Get SK Moving, Great Big Green Week etc
	<b>2.2</b> Annual promotion and engagement with National Fitness Day
	<b>2.3</b> Working with partners to deliver a minimum of 1 Wellbeing Walk in each market town
	<b>2.4</b> Achieve a 2% YoY increase in the levels of customer satisfaction at each leisure facility.



## Active People

Providing opportunities and programmes across many settings to help all people and communities to take part in regular physical activity

**3.1** Throughput/usage at South Kesteven owned leisure facilities by breakdown of users (CYP, adults, older adults, women/girls)

**3.2** Number of Exercise Referral Scheme participants through South Kesteven owned leisure facilities

**3.3** Percentage of Adults and Children who are considered overweight or obese

## Active Society

Coordinated leadership, partnerships and workforce capability to reduce sedentary behaviour

**4.1** Social value of Sport and Physical Activity in South Kesteven owned leisure facilities.

**4.2** QUEST plus accreditation to a minimum rating of 'very good' in all South Kesteven owned leisure facilities

**4.3** Number of GP practices registered as a RCGP Active Practice





# Our Facilities

[www.southkesteven.gov.uk/arts-leisure-and-culture/sports-and-leisure](http://www.southkesteven.gov.uk/arts-leisure-and-culture/sports-and-leisure)

**Grantham Meres Leisure Centre**

**Bourne Leisure Centre**

**Stamford Leisure Pool**

## Links to Key Documents - References

[South Kesteven District Council Corporate Plan - 2024 to 2027](#)

[Sport England - Uniting the Movement 2021 - 2031](#)

[UK Chief Medical Officers' Physical Activity Guidelines](#)

[Active Lives data](#)

[Local authority health profile - Fingertips](#)

[Joint Strategic Needs Assessment \(JSNA\) - Lincolnshire Health Intelligence Hub](#)

[Get Active: A Strategy for the future of sport and physical activity](#)

[DCMS Youth Strategy](#)

[NHS England - Fit for the Future: 10 Year Health Plan for England](#)

[Millions more moving - The Richmond Group of Charities](#)

[Horizon Scanning: Future Trends in Sport and Physical Activity - May 2025](#)

[NHS England - Harnessing the benefits of physical activity](#)

[Let's Move Lincolnshire Strategy - Active Lincolnshire](#)



# Contact Details

Alternative formats are available on request:  
audio, large print and Braille

South Kesteven District Council  
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 [www.southkesteven.gov.uk](http://www.southkesteven.gov.uk)

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